



The RACER Trust: Empowering America's Auto Communities



Pontiac, MI

RACER Site 10010

Employee Development Center
65 University Drive
Pontiac, MI 48342

Updated June 2021

Site Description

Located in downtown Pontiac, this 3.66-acre parcel was vacant when RACER took ownership. It included a paved parking lot in an area zoned for commercial buildings.

According to historical references, several residences and associated garages existed on the property from 1909 through 1950. Most structures were demolished in the early to mid-1950s, and an auto dealership was built at the property, operating from the early to mid-1950s to 1978. The property then operated under GMC's Truck and Bus Division as an engineering center for the construction of prototype vehicles and associated engineering development activities. These activities ceased in 1992. The building was remodeled in 1994 for use as a joint GM/UAW training and employee development center, and operated as such until 2007. After three years as a vacant building, the structure was taken down in 2010, and the basement was backfilled. The property was sold in 2017 to George W. Auch Company, which has subsequently constructed its headquarters there.

Cleanup activities are performed by RACER Trust, with the approval and oversight of the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) under Part 201 of the Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act. The Settlement Agreement that established RACER Trust set aside approximately \$1,213,426 for cleanup work at this property.

Environmental History

Sources of contamination and a significant amount of impacted soil have been removed from the property, and follow-up groundwater monitoring is in progress.

Former operations and activities at the property resulted in the release of gasoline constituents, motor and hydraulic oils, and low concentrations of chlorinated solvents. Contributing sources included a former gasoline

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George W. Auch Co. built its new headquarters on the former GM Employee Development Center property.

underground storage tank (UST) and associated dispenser station, a former waste oil/spill UST, automobile service area trench drains and an oil/sand separator, underground hydraulic lifts, and a dynamometer.

The two 1,000-gallon USTs were located outside of the north-northeast portion of the former building location. During removal of the tanks in 1990, soil samples identified a number of contaminants, including benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylenes, and a release was subsequently reported to the state. Closure of the tanks was achieved in 1995, but in November 2006 additional gasoline contamination was discovered in the area of underground piping and former dispenser associated with a former gasoline UST. Investigations conducted in November and December 2006 also identified petroleum and limited solvent contamination in areas under and around the building. Given the presence of co-mingled contamination, in February 2007 the property was entered into the Michigan Part 201 program.

From 2006 through 2012, soil borings and groundwater sampling wells were installed to delineate the extent of soil and groundwater contamination underground at the property.

Based on an evaluation of remedial alternatives, soil excavation with post-excavation groundwater monitoring was selected as a preferred remedy. An excavation work plan was completed and approved by the state in 2011.

Excavation activities were completed at the property in May-June 2012. The excavation was approximately 14,480 square feet, and impacted soil was excavated to depths ranging from nine to 17 feet below ground level. Activities included removal and off-site disposal of 9,243 tons of impacted soils and 756 tons of asphalt and concrete, as well as removal and off-site disposal of abandoned underground hydraulic lifts and portions of service area trench drains within the bounds of the excavation. A total of 9,152 tons of sand was placed and compacted to backfill the excavation and the excavation area was then finished to grade with 268 yards of crushed stone.

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Post-excavation groundwater monitoring activities commenced in January 2013 with the installation of additional monitoring wells and performance of periodic groundwater sampling events. These activities continue. In September 2014, additional subsurface investigation activities were conducted to better characterize residual soil and groundwater impacts at the property. In addition, groundwater monitoring activities were supplemented with storm sewer sampling activities in 2014 and 2015 to evaluate the potential for migration of residual contaminants to surface waters.

A Declaration of Restrictive Covenant (DRC) for the property was approved by the state on October 24, 2016, and was recorded with the Oakland County Register of Deeds on November 2, 2016. A summary of the DRC includes the following: restricts use of the property to nonresidential; prohibits installation of groundwater wells or use of groundwater except for EGLE-approved response activity or short-term construction dewatering; requires proper soil management and relocation; requires soil vapor management before constructing or occupying any structure; and provides notice of the potential presence of residual LNAPL in a small portion of the property.

Based on the results of the 2014 additional subsurface investigation activities, groundwater and sewer monitoring results, and the recorded DRC, RACER submitted a No Further Action Report dated November 10, 2016, to the state. The No Further Action Report covered the property but not contamination that had migrated into a small area of adjacent Mill Street. On December 6, 2016, the state issued a Notice of Approval of the No Further Action Report.

Groundwater monitoring was initiated again in 2017 for several off-site monitoring wells located in the rights-of-way of adjacent Mill Street and continued until June 2021. Based on observed low concentrations of benzene and trichloroethene in groundwater, a Public Highway Institutional Control for a small area of Mill Street was submitted in March 2021 to EGLE and the City of Pontiac.

Next Steps

Next steps include continued preparation of a No Further Action Report for the small, off-site area of Mill Street, and the property owner complying with and RACER monitoring compliance with the DRC.

More detailed information on the site can be viewed at the RACER website at www.racertrust.org.